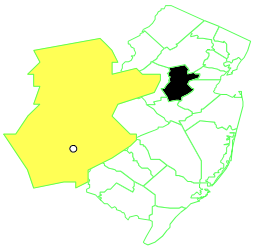
HIGGINS FARM
NEW JERSEY
EPA ID# NJD981490261



EPA REGION 2
CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 7
Somerset County
Franklin Township

Other Names:
Route 518

Site Description

The Higgins Farm Superfund site is located in a rural area along Route 518 in Franklin Township, Somerset County, New Jersey. The site is approximately 75 acres in size and is currently operated as a cattle farm. The site is primarily pasture land with two residences. The site is bordered to the south by Kingston Quarry of Trap Rock Industries, Inc. and to the east and west by private residences.

In 1985, the Franklin Township Health Department conducted sampling of a nearby residential well and found elevated levels of chlorobenzene. Subsequent investigations by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) led to the discovery of a drum burial dump at the site approximately 40 yards from the contaminated well.

In March 1987, NJDEP requested that EPA assume the lead role for mitigating the site. In April 1987, EPA stabilized the site to control further releases of hazardous substances into the environment. The site was proposed for inclusion on the National Priorities List (NPL) in June 1988. In March 1989, the site was formally placed on the NPL.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through Federal and State actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY
Proposed Date: 06/24/88
Final Date: 03/30/89

Threats and Contaminants

Groundwater and monitoring wells is contaminated with VOCs, semi-VOCs, and metals. Potential health threats include exposure to contaminants through ingestion of contaminated groundwater.

Cleanup Approach

Site contamination was addressed in two stages: (1) immediate action to provide affected residents with an alternate water supply and (2) a permanent long-term remedial action to address the groundwater contamination.

Response Action Status

Alternate Water Supply: A Record of Decision was signed on September 24, 1990, and the remedial action was completed in November 1993. This interim remedy included the design and construction of a water main extension distribution system and connection to an existing water supply system. A total of 26 homes were connected to the distribution system extension. Carbon units were removed from the residential wells and the wells were closed to prevent future use.

Long-Term Groundwater Remedial Action: A second Record of Decision was signed on September 30, 1992, which selected a remedy for contaminated ground water at the site. The major components of the remedy included the installation of groundwater extraction wells around the perimeter of the site, the construction of an on-site groundwater treatment plant, and implementation of a long-term groundwater monitoring plan to evaluate the continued effectiveness of the groundwater treatment system.

By providing a permanent alternate water source, the EPA and the State have eliminated threats to potentially affected residents from contaminated groundwater at the Higgins Farm site. In addition, the on-site groundwater treatment system will limit further migration of contaminated groundwater, while actively reducing contaminant levels.

Site Facts: EPA notified the potentially responsible parties of their liability for cleanup activities in 1988 and 1989 and offered them an opportunity to conduct or finance the initial investigation of site contamination. These parties refused to finance or undertake the investigation. EPA also offered the potentially responsible parties the opportunity to conduct or finance the remedial design and remedial action for the site. Again, these parties refused.

In order to recover EPA's past costs, EPA and the U.S. Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against the potentially responsible parties in September 1998. The case is currently in litigation.

Cleanup Progress  *(Actual Construction Completion)*

All remedial action construction activities have been completed at the site. Currently, a groundwater modeling study is being conducted to redefine the extent of the plume. Also, an optimization study has been conducted to better improve the operation of the groundwater treatment plant.